

Two months ago, I sent a letter to the Attorney General demanding answers why the Department of Justice was hanging out to dry four deputy U.S. marshals who had bravely defended the Portland courthouse against leftwing street militias in the summer of 2020. Those marshals are now facing civil litigation, but the Department is refusing to defend them in court, putting them at risk of bankruptcy, and perhaps most alarming of all, it won't even tell them why.

Now, the Department still hasn't provided definitive answers; and after I raised this alarm, they took another step and put the marshals on limited duty, telling them that after 20 months of active unrestricted duty they are now under investigation for the events in Portland. That is despite the fact that they received an award for their actions in Portland, received outstanding and excellent performance evaluations for 2020, and were, again, deployed to some of the most dangerous and high-risk missions that our law enforcement officers can undertake.

Call me crazy, but I have to say this seems like a case of potential retaliation. But it does, in a way, give the marshals the information we were seeking to help them understand their status. I also understand that at least one marshal has filed a complaint for retaliation against Vanita Gupta, the Assistant Attorney General.

The facts will come out one way or another. My message to the Department of Justice today is this: You will be held accountable for your actions against these law enforcement officers if they are inappropriate or even unlawful. If not this year, it will happen next year because I also want to add that yesterday, I and several of my colleagues, including the Judiciary Committee's ranking member Senator GRASSLEY and the former Judiciary Committee chairman, Senator GRAMM, sent a letter to the Department about this investigation. We intend to get to the bottom of it, and we are committed to an oversight investigation in the 118th Congress if one doesn't occur in this Congress.

I have also spoken to our Republican colleagues on the House Judiciary Committee who have today issued a request to the Department of Justice to preserve documents in this matter.

Now that I am confident the Department will receive the oversight that it deserves in this matter, I will no longer object to these nominees. Therefore, given these developments in this matter, I will withdraw my objection to the confirmation of today's nominees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the following nominations en bloc: Ryan K. Buchanan, of Georgia, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia for the term of four years; Jason M. Frierson, of Nevada, to be United

States Attorney for the District of Nevada for the term of four years; Mark A. Totten, of Michigan, to be United States Attorney for the Western District of Michigan for the term of four years; Marisa T. Darden, of Ohio, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio for the term of four years; Delia L. Smith, of the Virgin Islands, to be United States Attorney for the District of the Virgin Islands for the term of four years; Eddie M. Frizell, of Minnesota, to be United States Marshal for the District of Minnesota for the term of four years; LaDon A. Reynolds, of Illinois, to be United States Marshal for the Northern District of Illinois for the term of four years; Trina A. Higgins, of Utah, to be United States Attorney for the District of Utah for the term of four years; Jane E. Young, of New Hampshire, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Hampshire for the term of four years; and Vanessa Roberts Avery, of Connecticut, to be United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut for the term of four years?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF MARISA T. DARDEN

Mr. BROWN. I thank Senator COTTON for working together on this. These nominations are very important to our States. I heard Senator MCCONNELL earlier talking about crime on the streets, and getting these people in place is really important. It has been 473 days since the 6 million people in the Northern District of Ohio last had a permanent U.S. attorney.

The pandemic is causing an alarming rise in violent crime, especially gun crimes. The Northern District is no exception. The U.S. Attorney's Office has experienced its highest caseload in 30 years by filing a record 846 indictments in 2021. Even before the pandemic, the district had a staggering caseload. Last year, there were 170 homicides in the city I live in, the city of Cleveland—another 30-year record—not to mention the surge in carjackings. Filling this important law enforcement position to keep our community safe is essential.

I hear from police officers in desperate need of help. They need more resources, whether it is bulletproof vests to support local law enforcement, operations training to engage with those they serve, or getting U.S. marshals and U.S. attorneys on the job. Today, with Senator COTTON, we are able to do that.

We have an extremely qualified nominee ready and eager to serve. Marisa Darden is a seasoned prosecutor with extensive experience as the lead attorney in both criminal and civil cases. No one has any objections to her. Nobody has any doubt about her accomplishments and capacity to excel in this job. She was assistant U.S. attorney in the Northern District and was recognized for her work on several

complex legal cases. She received the National High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Award for Outstanding Opioid Investigative Effort. She received the Award for Outstanding Investigative Effort—a different one—in 2019. She has significant management experience and a record of strong leadership.

Federal Judge Benita Pearson said:

You can be assured Ms. Darden will fiercely enforce the law while treating all—attorneys, staff, the accused, and the community—with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

Former Acting U.S. Attorney Justin Herdman, a Republican—the last confirmed U.S. attorney in the Northern District—described her as an attorney “of outstanding ability and unquestioned integrity.”

First Assistant Federal Public Defender Jacqueline Johnson wrote her first recommendation for a U.S. attorney in 38 years of practice—imagine that. She said that she “possesses the intellect, vision, temperament, and judgment needed to lead [this] office.”

DEA Special Agent in Charge Keith Martin echoed those comments, saying that “she is one of the best he has encountered.”

It is because of these qualifications that Senator PORTMAN has joined me in supporting Ms. Darden's nomination.

Her confirmation would be historic, making her the first African-American woman to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio.

Today, we come together to get qualified and talented law enforcement professionals on the job. I thank Senator COTTON for his cooperation on this, and I thank the Presiding Officer, Senator BALDWIN, for her work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to complete my remarks before the scheduled vote at 3:30.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ULYSSES S. GRANT

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, 200 years ago today, one of our Nation's greatest heroes was born. Ulysses S. Grant rose from humble beginnings to stand next to Lincoln and Washington as one of America's indispensable men. This great defender of America won our bloodiest war, crushed the darkest forces of disunion, bandaged our deepest national wounds, and bridged the greatest political divides. He was an unshakable pillar of strength upon which this Nation's future rested time and again.

Virtually no one foresaw Grant's rise to greatness before the Civil War. Although he had graduated from West Point and distinguished himself as a soldier in the Mexican-American War, he had later stumbled from one failure to another in business.

In 1861, Grant was a man bent by humiliation and ridicule but unbroken.